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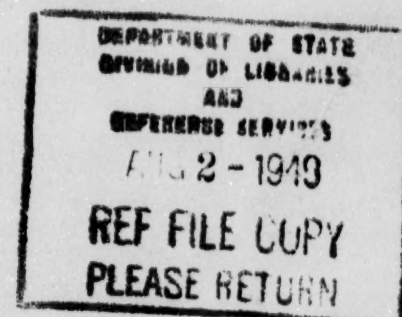
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Date: *Dec. 24, 1946*

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PRUSSIAN MILITARISM FOR NAZI IMPERIALISM:
POTENTIAL TENSIONS IN UNITED NATIONS PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE



Description

In view of the differing opinions on "Prussian Militarism" in United Nations PW, this report discusses the decreasing importance of Prussia and the Prussian Junkers in the aggressive policy of Nazi Germany.

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SUMMARY

Prussia no longer constitutes a political and social unity in present-day Germany. Unquestionably, emotional anti-Prussian feelings exist in Germany. To the Bavarian, the Austrian, or the Rhinelander, the term Prussia has certain traditional, unpleasant connotations, and serves as a focus for all misgivings about government regulations and bureaucracy. Yet this merely emotional anti-Prussian feeling -- comparable to the dislike of the South and West for the Eastern Yankee -- will immediately evaporate if it seems to be used as a lever for overturning German unity.

The term "Prussian militarism" no longer denotes a real political, governmental or social factor in present-day Germany. Prussia is no longer the core of Germany, nor are the Prussian Junkers the decisive driving force behind German aggressiveness. German aggressiveness is rooted in the expansionist tendencies of the armed command and many of the big industrialists, and finds its popular support among the nationalistic middle classes. In addition, the government has frequently used chauvinism as a means of overcoming the sharp social and economic conflicts within the country. As far as the Junkers still play a role, they are only subservient instruments of these forces.

Under these circumstances, the exclusive emphasis on Prussian militarism as the chief enemy may suggest an avenue of escape for the truly imperialistic forces behind the Army High Command. We should make it clear that we are not fighting Prussia, but rather the reactionary forces all over Germany which have time and again prevented the democratic reconstruction of German society.

Introduction

The destruction of Prussian militarism is today a crucial problem for United Nations Psychological Warfare against Germany. Roosevelt and Churchill have, in almost identical statements, declared that the annihilation of Prussian militarism is a capital war aim. Churchill elaborated this as follows:

"The core of Germany is Prussia. There is the source of the recurring pestilence.... I am sure the British, American and Russian peoples, who have suffered measureless waste, peril and bloodshed twice in a quarter of a century through the Teutonic urge for domination, will this time take steps to put it beyond the power of Prussia or all Germany to come at them again. Nazi tyranny and Prussian militarism are the two main elements in German life which must be absolutely destroyed."

About the same time as Churchill's speech, a Union of German officers was founded in Moscow which includes high ranking Prussian militarists among its leaders. Over the Moscow radio they appeal to the German officers and men to overthrow the Nazi tyranny and to sue for an immediate peace. Russia seems to be convinced, if Germany's military situation continues to deteriorate, that she can use the Prussian officers for inducing the German army to turn against the Hitler regime and start a political revolution in Germany.

This propaganda from Moscow seems to be based on interpretation of the social and political structure of present day Germany which does not conform to that of the Western Powers. The Swedish press has already declared that Roosevelt's and Churchill's statements might be construed as political countermove against the National Free Germany Committee. ^{1/} Grave conflicts in Psychological Warfare and in actual policy might be the consequence of this divergence. Under these circumstances, it is appropriate to evaluate the actual role of Prussia and Prussian militarism in the rise and in the possible defeat of the Nazi system.

The problems to be discussed are: Is Prussia still the "core of Germany"? Is Prussian militarism chiefly responsible for Nazi oppression and aggression? The following analysis attempts to show the Nazi regime has brought about profound changes in the distribution of social and political power in Germany. In the course of these changes, Prussia as a political unit has been dissolved, the Prussian nobility has lost its powerful position, and the forces that make for imperialist aggression are not typically Prussian but are rather the interests

^{1/} Stockholm wire, September 23, 1943.
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of German heavy industry located in Western and Central Germany and in Upper Silesia, (2), the militarists, (3) the nationalistic elements of the middle classes and the intellectuals, (4) government leaders trying to harmonize bitter conflicts between the social and economic groups by way of nationalistic aggression.

In view of these facts, and because the definition of war guilt and responsibility is one of the most decisive factors in our PW against Germany, the singling out of Prussian militarism as "one of the two main elements in German life which must be absolutely destroyed" is perhaps an inadequate expression of our war aim. It may leave an avenue of escape for the aggressive forces not covered by this term; it may be interpreted as implying the separation of Prussia or East Prussia from the Reich, -- a plan which would not eliminate the source of German aggression and besides would create a strong and irreconcilable irredenta.

The term Prussian militarism refers to a definite social and political complex in German society. This complex contains roughly the following elements:

- (a) geographical: the Prussian territories east of the Elbe
- (b) economic: the large agrarian estates which characterize the economic structure of this region
- (c) social: the owners of these estates as a specially privileged class, the Prussian Junkers. This class has exercised its political influence either directly (as the most powerful land owners in the Reich), or, through its sons in the high officer corps of the German army and the higher ranks of the Civil Service.

- (d) ideological: a semi-feudal authoritarianism, resulting from the manifold personal, political, and administrative powers vested in the owners of the large estates. 1/

1/ The landed aristocracy of the East-Elbian territories were, by virtue of their economic position, a pre-capitalistic, semi-feudal class. Their power depended, not on expansion, but on the maintenance of their dominion, and on its protection from international capitalistic competition. "The large estates East of the Elbe are by no means mere economic units, but they are local political centers of domination. According to the Prussian tradition, they were supposed to provide the material basis for a stratum of the population which the State had entrusted with the exercise of political power.... The members of the landed aristocracy were qualified for this trusteeship ... because they were "economically saturated," with relatively undeveloped acquisitive instincts and an economic intelligence below average. Moreover, they are not inclined to a purely business-like exploitation of their political position, or at least they are not dependent on it." --- (Max Weber, Entwicklungstendenzen in der Lage der ostelbischen Landarbeiter, gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, 1924, p. 471.) Weber argues on the basis of these facts, the large estates of the Prussian nobility constituted an "effective counter-balance" against the political monopoly of the industrial bourgeoisie.

Prussia Under The Empire

The spectacular rise of Prussia to the rank of a great power in the 18th century was achieved in opposition and struggle against Reich and Emperor. Eighteenth-century Prussia, chiefly extending over Eastern "colonial" territories, was hardly regarded as a German state. Only at the end of the Napoleonic wars, through the Congress of Vienna, which enriched Prussia with the highly developed and densely populated Rhineland, did Prussia become central in German life.

The failure of the revolution of 1848 and the reactionary regime of the fifties were of decisive importance for the establishment of Prussian influence in German life. In defeating the liberal movement, the Junkers assured the continued existence of Prussia as well as their own dominant position in the Hohenzollern monarchy. It became certain that they would agree to the foundation of a German national state only if they felt that their continued existence and power would be guaranteed in the new Reich.

This Prussian influence in the Reich was assured in three different ways:

1) By retaining an electoral law in Prussia which made a conservative majority in the Prussian parliament certain (Dreiklassenwahlrecht), the Prussian conservatives continued to be the rulers of the Prussian state. They determined the general line of policy, and the entire higher administration of Prussia was reserved to members of their class, or to persons of whose conservative outlook they had made sure.

2) The constitution of the Reich assured dominant Prussian governmental influence (a) by establishing personal union between the Prussian Prime Minister and the Reichschancellor; (b) by the number of votes in the Bundesrat which the Prussian government had at its disposal.

3) The Junkers retained control of the army. No Reich army was created, but--with exception of the armies of Bavaria, Wuerttemberg, and Saxony, which remained independent units--the troops of the German states were incorporated into the Prussian army. Thus the direction of military affairs was not in the hands of a Reichsministry, but rather in those of a Prussian government official--the Prussian War Minister. Moreover, the Prussian officer corps was protected from political interference by the fact that the key military institutions--the General Staff and the Military Cabinet, which determined selection and promotion of officers--were directly subordinated to the Emperor.

4) The economic strength of the Junkers did not keep step with their political power. The industrialization of German life led to the rise of new classes and groups which threatened the privileged

position of the Junkers. To be sure, their political influence was strong enough to prevent the bourgeoisie from ushering in a new form of social life. Germany remained a semi-feudal state. The acceptance of the higher bourgeoisie into the ruling group remained dependent on their adherence to conservative standards. Moreover, through the institution of the Reserveoffizier, the way of life of large parts of the German bourgeoisie came to be patterned on the ideals, the code of honors, the behaviour of the Prussian Junker.

Nevertheless, the political position of the Junkers was gradually undermined by the deterioration of their economic position. Strong international competition for agricultural products threatened the German market. Because of the poor soil of the Junker estates, their transformation into profitable competitive enterprises would have required considerable investment of capital, but the Junker estates were overvaluated to such an extent that they could not obtain the capital necessary for such transformation. They had therefore increasingly to rely on protective tariffs, which they could get only by entering into a political alliance with German heavy industry. The two diverging interests agreed on a compromise by which industry consented to the protective tariffs, while the Junkers supported the expansionist foreign policy of heavy industry. The imperialist policy of the German Empire was chiefly the policy of the industrial bourgeoisie supported by militarist, intellectuals, and middle class nationalists. The National Liberal Party, the staunchest supporter of this policy, was representative of industrial interests. In the two great organizations propagandizing for German imperialism -- the German Colonial Society and the German Navy League -- the leading members were not Prussian Junkers but industrialists and academicians and publicists.

The simultaneous existence of such mutually hostile groups as the semi-feudal landowners, industrialists and other capitalists, the salaried middle classes, artisans, and industrial workers in a country so recently unified led politicians and even the government to use nationalistic aggression as a means of overcoming these internal conflicts.

Prussia Under The Republic

The political position of the Prussian Junkers declined under the Weimar Republic. The constitutional guarantees which the Junkers had enjoyed in the Bismarckian Reich were annulled. Although Prussia was not dissolved, as originally planned in 1918, she became a parliamentary democracy based on universal suffrage, and the conservatives lost their ruling position. Throughout the whole period of the Weimar Republic, Prussia was ruled by a leftist government; even in the election of 1933, the percentage of Nazi votes in Prussia was smaller than in any other German state. Although having lost all constitutional hold on governmental machinery, the Junkers continued to exert strong influence as a pressure group, through the army, and through their alliance with industry.

1) Because the new republican regime felt forced to make of the existing administrative apparatus (a monopoly of the conservatives during the Empire), a strong conservative element remained in the higher civil administration; since the old imperial civil servants continued in influential positions, they were able entirely to obstruct the democratization and republicanization of the civil administration.

2) The Prussian nobility remained firmly entrenched in the Officer Corps of the Republican Reichswehr. When the Reichswehr was founded, former Prussian officers remained in key positions, and since the Reichswehr of the Republic was a small professional army, these officers could apply a highly selective system in the choice of the officer corps, and could pattern the requirements in such a way that the Prussian Junker remained a decisive element. In 1932, 27.15% of German officers were nobles, vastly more than the percentage of nobles among the Reich population would warrant. However, the strength of the nobles in the higher army leadership and in the traditional army branches was much stronger than it was in the newer technical arms which became increasingly important.

3) The position of the conservatives in bureaucracy and army was reinforced by the election of Hindenburg as president in 1925, for he became a powerful advocate of these groups.

4) The alliance between large landowners and industry grew more intimate. The competitive position of the large Eastern estates on the international market continued to deteriorate, and the Junkers had more than ever to rely on outside protection. German industry was most willing to support the demands of the Junkers, who were its best customers for agricultural machines, and for artificial nitrogen (a domestic monopoly of the German Dye Trust, which at that time had already fallen in line with the policy of heavy industry). Industrial pressure groups and parties backed the granting of Osthilfe, which protected the Junkers from open bankruptcy. Although the Junkers regained considerable influence,

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the fact that the conservative party had, since 1928, come under the leadership of Alfred Hugenberg (connected with the Vereinigte Stahlwerke and with Krupp), shows the extent of Junker dependency on the power of big industry.

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Prussia under the Nazi Regime

The Nazis completed the process of eliminating the Prussian Junkers as a decisive political power. This was necessitated by several factors:

- (a) the transformation of the Reich into a centralized totalitarian state under unified terroristic control led to the abolition of Prussia as a political unit. All Prussian ministries (except the Finance Ministry) have been merged with the Reich ministries. The Prussian provinces have been reduced to Gaue on an equal administrative footing with political units all over the Reich. (See appendix)
- (b) the requirements of the war economy compelled the Nazis to develop German industry to full capacity regardless of market profits. The economic structure of Germany was reorganized in its entirety in the interests of the industrial sector.
- (c) Simultaneously, the political power (direct and indirect) of big industry increased steadily. The amalgamation of the "self-government of business" with governmental agencies and institutions reveals the extent to which the Nazi state is shaped by the interests of the large industrial and financial concerns.
- (d) This state has adopted a new ideology oriented to the standards to technocratic efficiency regardless of traditional status and privileges. The Nazi state functions through the organization and manipulation of masses and machines. All these features conflict with the semi-feudal conservative authoritarianism of the Prussian Junkers. To this must be added the anti-Christian tendencies of the Nazi ideology which also are antipathetic to them.
- (e) The initial petty bourgeois and equalitarian character of Nazi popular support demanded a type of social and governmental regime hostile to the Junker tradition.

This resulted in the practical disappearance of the Prussian Junkers from the policy making level. A study of the top ranks of the Nazi hierarchy (The Reich Cabinet, the Reich Statthalter, the N.S.D.A.P. Reich Leiter and Gauleiter, and some other top officials) with respect to the ratio of Prussians and Prussian Junkers, shows that only ten out of eighty-six are of Prussian origin (from territories East of the Elbe), while not a single Prussian Junker is among them. Moreover, with the exception of two (Daluge and Lohse), all Prussian Nazi officials are of minor political importance. The vast majority of really powerful Nazi leaders come from the Rhineland, Bavaria, Central Germany, and Austria.

Among the higher ranks of the S.S. (Oberst and Obergruppenführer), only five out of sixty-four leaders belong to the nobility, and three of these come from Western and Southern Germany.

The position of the Prussian Junker in the German army deserves special discussion. In the Armed Forces High Command (OKW), there is not a single member of the nobility. However, this is not the case if we examine the commanders of army groups; among the seven commanders of army groups, only one does not belong to a noble family. In the higher ranks of the Officer Corps, the proportion of nobility is still rather large. Among generals (and above), about 40% belong to the nobility, among major generals about 25%, among brigadier generals about 16%. It is not surprising that, owing to the dominant position of the Prussian Junkers in the Reichswehr, the German army still has a strong aristocratic element. But it is also characteristic of recent developments that this element declines rapidly in the lower grades, so that at present the share of the nobility in the Officer Corps is far below the 27.5% of Reichswehr days, a percentage much more in proportion to the ratio of nobility to the rest of the German population.

Two other factors should be considered: in the foregoing figures, no distinction is made between Prussian nobility and German nobility in general, and close examination of the aristocratic names in the German army shows that the portion of South German and Austrian nobility is very great. Moreover, these figures refer only to the German army; neither the Air Corps nor the Waffen SS has been taken into consideration. Since these branches are of rather recent origin, and demand technical knowledge or abilities not typical of the Prussian Junker, the share of the nobility in these branches has been very small, and has never gone beyond 10% even in the highest ranks. The requirements of modern warfare undoubtedly led to a democratization of the army, to new relations between officers and men, and to a decline of the Prussian "spirit."

The strength of the Nazi army depends to a great extent on the striking power of highly specialized small units having high technological and organizational efficiency. Leadership of such units calls for a technical training which is entirely alien to the tradition of the Prussian nobility, and for an organizational coordination unsuitable to the cast spirit of the Junkers. The strict discipline of these units lies in the cohesion of technical teams rather than in the Kadavergehorsam of the old Prussian army. Here too, the technocratic morale of industrial super-organizations has replaced the semi-feudal ideology of Prussianism.

On the policy making level of the German higher Civil Service (as far as it is not identical with the military hierarchy), i.e., among the Under Secretaries of State, the chiefs of the Main Departments of the Reich Ministries, and the Presidents of the Oberlandesgerichter we find only three who may be considered as Prussian Junkers. Even in the Reich Food Estate (Reichsnaehrstand) the Nazi overall organization for German agriculture, the leadership does not

rest with the Junkers. The list of the administrative and political officials includes only a few noble names; here, too, control is exercised by Nazi bureaucrats and by the new Nazi "peasant elite."

The great exception is the German Diplomatic Corps. Here, the influence of the traditional Prussian nobility is still very strong. Yet it should not be forgotten that the traditional character of the German Foreign Service is intentionally retained by the Nazis in order to have at their disposal negotiators for potential compromise.

All this does not mean that the policy of the Nazis has been adverse to the economic and social position of the Junkers. On the contrary, they have been protected in many ways: the Fideikommiss (right of entail) have been maintained, the advantages of the Hereditary Estate Law have been made available to them, they have been supplied with foreign slave labor, and the process of agricultural centralization has continued. Moreover, some Junkers have been rewarded with large estates in the occupied Eastern territories. These economic privileges, however, do not invalidate the fact that the Junkers have lost their political predominance. Industrial concentration and the totalitarian integration of Germany into the imperialistic war economy have led to a new distribution of power in which political control rests solely with the new Nazi Party hierarchy and its industrialist military and petty bourgeois.

Prussian Militarists in the Union of German
Officers in Moscow

The Prussian militarists retain, however, a dominant position in the higher brackets of the German army, and it is by virtue of this position that they constitute a special target for PW. A military coup d'etat against the Hitler regime is unquestionably one of the possible form of German collapse. In this event, Prussian Junkers officers would probably be among the leaders of such an army revolt, and the question arises whether and to what extent our PW should be prepared to utilize the tension between the old Prussian officer corps and the Nazis. The Russians have already done so. The Union of German Officers, recently established in Moscow and affiliated with the National Free Germany Committee, numbers among its leaders many Prussian aristocrats. Indeed, it seems that the Russians have taken great pains to include in the Union as many members of the old Prussian nobility as possible, men with names suggesting that very Prussian militarism denounced by Roosevelt and Churchill as the arch enemy.

The president of the Officers' Union is General of Artillery Walter von Seydlitz of the oldest Silesian nobility; his family dates back to the 13th century. Vice presidents are (among others) Lieutenant General Maximilian Alexander Moritz Wilhelm Edler von Daniels-Spangenberg, Knight of the Order of St. John, and Colonel van Huven. Among the members of the Union who have also been included in the National Free Germany Committee are Major Egbert von Frankenberg und Proschlitz, whose family goes back to 1200, and Isenhardus von Knobelsdorff-Brenkenhoff, of old Saxon nobility going back to 1203.

The accumulation of such names cannot be accidental -- the less so since it was preceded by the nomination to the Vice Presidency of the Free Germany Committee of Count von Einsiedel, a great grandson of Bismarck. The Russians certainly wanted to impress the higher ranks of the German army, but perhaps they also wanted to demonstrate their determination, if no agreement with the Western Powers can be reached, to go ahead with their own policy towards Germany.

The immediate goal of this policy is to win over certain anti-Nazi cliques in the Army Officer Corps who may some day (if the German defeats continue) be able to overthrow the Hitler regime. From this point of view, the choice of the leaders of the German Officers' Union was a shrewd one.

General von Seydlitz and Lieutenant-General Edler von Daniels are considered to be officers of high military accomplishment. A reliable source reports that they have tried at pistol's point to compel General von Paulus to withdraw from Stalingrad contrary to Hitler's orders before the last opportunity to do so had passed. The officers of the Union are said to be highly esteemed by their colleagues on the Eastern front, and they may already have established contacts with German officers now leading troops against the Russians. Soviet propaganda may thus be able to make good use of the activities of the Union. Its effects in Germany cannot yet be assessed, but unquestionably its broadcasts are listened to -- Paul Schmidt mentioned them in one of his official press conferences, and the Bern correspondent of Nya Dagligt Allehanda reported that the appeal of the Officers' Union circulated so swiftly in Germany and carried so much interest that Himmler is considering the strictest countermeasures -- even the confiscation of private radio sets.

The Russians apparently believe that the tensions between the "Prussian" and the Nazi circles in the Army command are strong enough to dissolve the cohesion of the Wehrmacht when defeat seems to be inevitable. If this should happen before the British and American troops have approached the inner core of the European Fortress, the Russians would have considerably strengthened their bargaining position in the shaping of post-war Europe.

What are the other implications of this PW policy? We must face the possibility that, if the situation on the Eastern front continues to deteriorate, the dissenting groups in the army command may actually turn against the Hitler regime and stage a successful coup d'etat. The revolting generals could not set up a government of their own without some kind of popular support, and they will have to ally themselves with groups and programs capable of providing them with such support. Now there is -- apart from the ruling Nazi hierarchy -- only one group that seems to be excluded from such alliance according to the program of the Officers Union, namely, the "heads of the financial and industrial concerns," the present leaders of German industry. Next to the Nazis, they have been most consistently singled out as the "organizers" of the Nazi crimes and their "associates" in them. 1/ This means that the Russians will probably strive for a reorganization of former industry, (perhaps for some form of nationalization), and that they have reason to believe that the military leaders whom they have won over will not stand in the way of such reorganization. In other words, the Russians consider the present setup of German industry as the actual source of German aggression, and they think that, with the destruction of this source, Prussian militarism has lost its danger.

1/ Broadcast of August 26, 1943. This broadcast was, perhaps significantly, beamed to Great Britain in English.
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APPENDIX

Prussia's Present Status in the Governmental and Administrative Organization of the Reich

Prior to 1933, Prussian and the other Laender (which were the constituent units of the German Reich) were still politically and administratively important. They had comparatively large law-making powers of their own, and as to executive powers, they retained the crucial departments of police and of general interior administration. Through the institution of the Federal Council (Reichsrat), moreover, the Laender directly influenced Reich policies, especially in the realm of legislation. Prussia, in particular, was important because it comprised more than half of the Reich's population and territory.

National Socialism, in a little over a year after its rise to power, abolished the traditional federal structure of the Reich, making it a strictly centralized state. Although the Laender retained the outward appearance of constituent units as to name, boundaries, and, in most cases, governmental institutions, they actually lost their autonomy and became mere administrative subdivisions of the Reich. This was achieved by putting them under the direction of a Reich-appointed official, the Reich Governor (Reichsstatthalter), who takes his directives from, and is under the supervision of, the Reich Government, and transmits its instructions to the Land government (still so-called) or to the regional Land authorities. The abolition of the Federal Council and various Laender parliaments put an end to their legislative activities or influences. In the field of the executive, moreover, police and interior administration -- besides many other branches of executive government -- were taken away from the Laender and handed over to the Reich.

In the case of Prussia, this process of disintegration has gone even further. Prussia was beheaded by the Nazis and dissected into its component parts. This has been achieved by merging the top of its government with Reich authorities, and by making its main sub-divisions, the Provinces, administrative units directly under the Reich government. The "Prussianization" of the Reich after 1871 has thus ended in the Verreichlichung of Prussia.

All Prussian ministries, with the exception of Finance, have been merged with the corresponding Reich ministries which, in addition to their activities concerning the whole of the Reich, exercise those functions for Prussia which in the case of the other Laender are still left to the Laender ministries. Although Goering, to whom Hitler has delegated his powers as Reich Governor of Prussia, retains in addition the title of Prussian "Minister President," this means rather less than being Governor or Minister President in another Land. Since, with the one exception mentioned, ministries

no longer exist, directives are given by the Reich agencies directly to the respective middle or lower authorities. There would be no point in, e.g., the Reich Labor Ministry's asking Goering to transmit a directive to regional Labor Offices, because there is no longer a separate Prussian Labor Ministry coordinating labor matters for Prussia. It also would make Goering appear as a subordinate to the various Reich ministries, a situation which he would not be likely to put himself in.

Real regional government, (that part of government and administration which, under Reich auspices, is exercised in the case of the other Laender by the Laender governments), lies with Prussia in the Provinces. Here, the Provincial Presidents (Oberpraesidenten), /most of whom are Gauleiter/, fulfil those functions which in the other Laender and the Reichsgaue, are entrusted to the Reich Governors. They are "commissars" of the central Reich government, who must see to it that Reich policies are executed in their regions, and that regional government and administration proceeds in accordance with Reich directives. The center of gravity for regional administration has thus shifted from Prussia as a whole to the Prussian Provinces, and there is not much which is left to Prussia as a unit.

What remains of centralized activities is the following: Goering, as Minister President, exercises some of the powers which are left to other Reich Governors and Land governments: e.g., the issuing of those decrees which the Reich Government wants Prussia also to decree; the appointment of certain classes of officials; the exercise, in certain cases, of the right of pardon. Otherwise his functions are largely ceremonial. Thus, he appoints, convenes, and presides over the Prussian State Council (Staatsrat), a body of Nazi dignitaries and other "conspicuous" persons which was supposed to "advise" Goering upon his Prussian functions, but actually has not been convened since the outbreak of the war and, before that met only to listen to music or an occasional address by one of its members.

Prussia still has retained certain autonomy in financial matters. It has its own budget and levies certain taxes, mainly taxes on real estate. These functions are exercised under the direction of the Prussian Ministry of Finance, which also controls a number of public enterprises, as for instance, the Prussian State Bank and certain mining enterprises.

Another example of Prussia's decline is the fact that almost all territories formerly belonging to the Reich which were re-incorporated since 1935, and which, prior to 1918, had been Prussian, were not given back to Prussia but were made units of the Reich (Reichsgaue). While Prussia regained only Polish Upper Silesia and parts of Ostpreussen, the formerly Prussian provinces of Posen and Westpreussen and the formerly Prussian parts of the Saar territory were not restored to Prussia. Thus it appears that the present

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political and administrative unit known as Prussia, is less important than at any other time in its history, even less important than other subdivisions of the Reich -- Bavaria, Saxony, etc.

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